

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

Figures 26 and 27 are hereby amended to be labeled PRIOR ART.
Replacement sheets are attached hereto.

REMARKS

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 1-14 are currently being prosecuted. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider his rejections in view of the Amendments and Remarks as set forth hereinbelow.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

It is gratefully acknowledged that the Examiner considers the subject matter of claims 13 and 14 as being allowable. In addition, the Examiner considers the subject matter of claims 1-12 as being allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection based on 35 USC 112. Although not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejections, claims 1-12 have been amended to comply with the Examiner's requirements regarding the rejection based on 35 USC 112. Claims 1-14 are now in condition for allowance.

CLAIM FOR PRIORITY

It is gratefully acknowledged that the Examiner has recognized the Applicant's claim for foreign priority. In view of the fact that the Applicant's claim for foreign priority has been perfected, no additional action is required from the Applicant at this time.

DRAWINGS

The Examiner has objected to Figs. 26 and 27 for not being labeled Prior Art. Attached hereto are replacement sheets for Figs. 26 and 27 that have been labeled Prior Art. The drawings have been amended to comply with the requirements by the Examiner. The drawings are now in proper form. No further action is believed necessary with regard to the drawings.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

The Examiner has acknowledged the Information Disclosure Statement filed on March 18, 2004. An initialed copy of the PTO-1449 has been received from the Examiner. No further action is necessary at this time.

OBJECTION TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1 and 7 stand objected to as being informal. This objection is respectfully traversed.

As the Examiner will note, claims 1 and 7 have been amended to incorporate the helpful suggestions of the Examiner. The claims are now in proper form.

REJECTION UNDER 35 USC 112

Claims 1-12 stand rejected under 35 USC 112 as being indefinite. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As the Examiner will note, claims 1 and 7 have been amended to incorporate the helpful suggestions of the Examiner. The claims are now comply with 35 USC 112. The Examiner's rejection has been obviated.

NO PROSECUTION HISTORY ESTOPPEL

Claims 1 and 7 have been amended to clarify the claims to overcome a rejection based on 35 USC 112. No prosecution history estoppel would apply to the interpretation of the limitations set forth in claims 1-14 in view of the fact that this subject matter has been continuously presented since the original filing date of the present application.

REQUEST FOR INTERVIEW

If the Examiner has any questions with regard to this application, he is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at (703) 205-8000 so that an interview can be arranged in connection with this application.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above remarks, it is believed that the claims clearly distinguish over the patents relied on by the Examiner, either alone or in combination.

Since the remaining patents cited by the Examiner have not been utilized to reject the claims, but to merely show the state of the art, no comment need be made with respect thereto.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the rejections and allowance of all of the claims are respectfully requested.

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

A prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No.

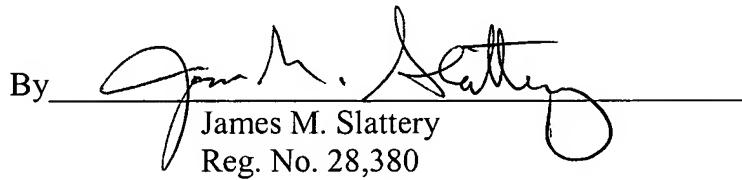
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02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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By 
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JMS/mmi

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